

MINUTES
CITY OF WOODSTOCK
CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AWARENESS COMMISSION
May 24, 2021

A Special Meeting of the City of Woodstock Cultural and Social Awareness Commission was called to order at 4:17PM on Monday, May 24, 2021 by Chairperson Juanita Vega. This meeting was held per the Governor's Emergency Order due to COVID-19 with all members, Staff and the public attending remotely.

A roll call was taken.

COMMISSION MEMBERS PRESENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS: None

COMMISSION MEMBERS ATTENDING REMOTELY: John Kendall, Jose Rivera, Joe Starzynski, Curtis Price and Chairperson Juanita Vega.

COMMISSION MEMBERS ABSENT: Jaci Krandel and Crystal Squires

STAFF PRESENT IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBERS: None

STAFF ATTENDING REMOTELY: Human Resources Director/Staff Liaison Deb Schober and City Clerk Cindy Smiley

OTHERS ATTENDING REMOTELY: None

ACCEPTANCE OF MINUTES

Motion by J. Starzynski, second by J. Kendall, to accept the minutes of the April 26, 2021 and May 10, 2021 meetings as presented.

Ayes: Rivera, Starzynski, Price and Chairperson Vega. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: Krandel and Squires.

Chairperson Vega stated this meeting is to approve the fliers so the Commission can begin advertising the DEI event, getting information out to people via Facebook and start looking for sponsors.

4. DISCUSSION ITEMS

A. Welcome New Commissioner – Curtis Price

Chairperson Vega welcomed Curtis Price to the Commission thanking him for his willingness to serve. She opined he will be a great addition to the Commission and will make it better. She stated having a diverse Commission is the start of great things for Woodstock and will contribute to the success of the Commission's projects. Chairwoman Vega invited Commissioner Price to introduce himself.

Commissioner Price stated he has been a resident of Woodstock since 1994 noting his wife of 27 years was born and raised in Woodstock. He stated he is the Athletic Director at Marian Central Catholic High School having been a part of MCCH since 1997. Noting he is originally from the south side of Chicago, Commissioner Price stated he loves living in Woodstock and would like to

fix the lack of diversity. He noted he is part of a similar commission through the National Athletic Director's Association explaining the efforts of that group and stating he is passionate about this subject. He stated he is looking to learn from this experience and also to provide information and is looking forward to working with everyone.

At the request of Chairwoman Vega, the Commission members, Ms. Schober and Ms. Smiley introduced themselves to Commissioner Price.

B. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Project – Diversity Celebration Sunday Services

Chairwoman Vega summarized the work done thus far on the DEI Project by the Commission noting they have worked on it for 5 months and now are entering implementation mode.

A general discussion ensued of the Discussion Items regarding the Diversity Celebration Sunday Series listed on the Agenda.

Ms. Schober informed the Commission there is \$8,000 in remaining funds available for use by the Commission for this project, noting the funds were raised as part of the New Americans Initiative Project. She stated Finance Director Paul Christensen recommends that \$1,000 be left in the account for possible future projects.

Noting she is not present, Ms. Schober stated Commissioner Squires told her she is ready to make individual program flyers once she has information for each of the events from the Commission members noting the flyers can then be placed on various media sources. Ms. Schober stated Commissioner Squires is working under the impression the marketing and program flyers have been approved asking that this be confirmed.

Ms. Schober put the marketing flyer on the screen for the Commission to see and review.

Chairperson Vega stated the goal is to approve these as they will be the main flyers which will be taken to Copy Express to be printed and posted around town. She opined the Commission should have two weeks to obtain sponsors before posting as someone may wish to sponsor the entire series and also to give time to place sponsor logos on the flyers. She urged everyone to take two weeks to try to get sponsors with the flyers being placed on social media without sponsors in the meantime. Stating while it is great that the Commission has money available, she opined it is still important to find sponsors so there will be money for the future.

Chairperson Vega opined the Commission has a great responsibility in this area with what is going on in the country to engage with all members of the community to make it better.

Noting the dates listed, Chairperson Vega expressed concern about the November 14th date for Age-Friendly Communities.

In response to a question from Commissioner Kendall if anyone is covering Shelter and Food Disparity, Chairperson Vega stated before Commissioner Wolff left the Commission, she secured the panelists for this topic who approved the date.

Discussion turned to the topic of Racial Diversity with Chairperson Vega noting Commissioner Kendall had been working on this. She opined this is one of the main events that could spark a great

presentation as well stating she hoped to get Commissioner Price's input and suggested he work with Commissioner Kendall on this topic. Commissioner Kendall stated he has talked with Stand Up Against Racism and they are interested in participating.

Commissioner Price stated they are working on something similar at MCC. He opined the word racism can scare people away, opining the Commission should come up with a name that will bring people in to have a conversation. He stated he would be happy to help with this topic noting he is passionate about trying to bring people together.

Stating some of these topics may be too big for one meeting and noting how the "Cultural Diversity" topic changed to "Latin American Diversity," Ms. Schober opined "Racial Diversity" may be too broad. She suggested having different presentations on different Sundays for different racial groups.

Commissioner Price asked what the Commission is trying to accomplish, opining if the Commission is trying to bring people together there should be an African American Day, Asian Day, etc. He stated people should be brought together to talk and be one. He stated at some point people will have to be brought together so they can see how each other feels.

Ms. Schober opined the line at the top of the flyer says it, "Come celebrate and learn about what makes us all unique!" She stated perhaps at the end, the Commission could host an event to bring everyone together.

Chairperson Vega agreed with Commissioner Price but opined before everyone can be brought together, people need to be educated that we are not that different. She opined because we do not look alike that has caused people to think we are different. She stated because the topic is "Latin American Culture" doesn't mean it is open only to Latinos.

Commissioner Kendall opined there should be a single Racial Diversity Day stating it is important to address what racism is and how it is different from culture and diversity. He stated it makes more sense to him to keep it as a day and discuss what racism is.

Ms. Schober stated there are a few questions to answer to get this project going including should the Age-Friendly Communities be changed to a racial topic, coming up with a name later?

Chairperson Vega opined it should be in the first set of events. Various names were suggested by the Commission members.

Commissioner Rivera stated he has reached the Mayor of Zacatecas noting it will be difficult to secure his attendance on July 11. He stated he would like to see if the date could be changed. Noting the importance of the topic and opining it should be in the first eight scheduled, Chairperson Vega asked Commissioner Price if the Commission could be ready to put a Racial Diversity topic on right at the beginning of the Series.

Commissioner Price opined the topic of "Understanding Race" sums up everything in the series and can tie everything together. He stated it is such a broad topic it can touch on everything done prior opining it is too strong a topic to start with right away.

Chairperson Vega agreed this would allow the series to build up to the racial topic in November and then have the World Holidays Sunday at the end. She stated this would start the year with a celebration, noting the food and music planned for the Latin American Diversity Sunday and end the year with a celebration bringing everyone together.

Ms. Schober stated she will contact Commissioner Squires to change November 14 to Understanding Race and also to add Woodstock Opera House after Stage Left Café.

In response to a question from Chairperson Vega, it was the consensus of the Commission that the flyer is approved with these changes.

In response to a question from Commissioner Rivera, Chairperson Vega stated July 11 will remain Latin American Diversity Sunday.

Discussion turned to the sponsor flyer.

Chairperson Vega opined no changes are needed, asking for Commission comments.

Ms. Schober directed everyone to Cultural and Social Awareness Commission's section of the City's website which now contains a DEI Project section. She described what will be included in this section, including how people could donate to the project through the page. She stated the individual flyers for the specific Sundays would be added also. Ms. Schober stated she will see that the posters are placed on the three City information boards around the Square. She noted Chairperson Vega has spoken with the Chamber about advertising through the Woodstock Independent and the events can also be advertised on the Community Sign in front of Burger King.

Ms. Schober stated if a Facebook page is going to be created for the series, it must be the City's Facebook group. She suggested the Commission work on a name for what it wishes to call the Facebook group and supply the information to her so that it may be created by a City staff member.

Chairperson Vega suggested the information be shared on the various social media and websites the members have access to such as the Latino Facebook page. She stated she will share this information and work with Commissioner Krandel to work on creating information on the initiative's objectives and information about the Commission and what it wishes to accomplish which will be sent to Ms. Schober to be shared with everyone.

Ms. Schober suggested the web page URL be added to the sponsorship flyer.

In response to a question from Chairperson Vega, it was the consensus of the Commission that the sponsorship flyer is approved with the addition of the web page information.

It was the consensus of the Commission that the marketing information is approved with the change to the November 14th dates and the addition of the Woodstock Opera House.

C. Updates from the Coordinators:

Latin American Culture – Commissioner Rivera stated he is working with a Mariachi group to secure one band for one hour on July 11. He stated he and Chairperson Vega are working on food for the

event. He stated he may be in Mexico on that date but will work for Chairperson Vega to make sure everything is set.

Chairperson Vega stated she has secured a group from Columbia that will play music from the Andes for one hour. She stated it is also planned to make a 15 to 20 minute presentation about Latin American cultures between the two musical groups. She stated this will be a celebration including food, music and information to celebrate the beginning of the DEI series. She noted the day will also include a welcome to the community and an opening statement about what the series is.

Noting right now the capacity is 50 people, Chairperson Vega stated the plan is to invite Mayor Turner, the City Council members and the business community.

Noting Woodstock is the only municipality in the County that has a Cultural and Social Awareness Commission, Commissioner Starzynski stated it is a unique undertaking in the entire county as far as government is concerned. He stated this is a City commission that is diverse; the fact that it exists is unique; and the fact that it is undertaking this series is unique. He opined, therefore, members of other City commissions should be invited as should governmental members of other county municipalities.

Chairperson Vega stated Lauren Underwood, Sue Ness and Steve Reick will be invited opining it is important to invite them to opening day because this will have a great impact not only on the county but on the State of Illinois as well.

She noted she knows a person in Crystal Lake who has a group working on racial diversity who is excited about what this event can accomplish.

Chairperson Vega urged everyone to think of July 11 not only as the Latin American Culture event but as the kick-off for the entire series as well.

E. Next Meeting Date

Ms. Schober noted at this point Zoom meetings will be held through June 11, with in-person meetings beginning after this.

Chairperson Vega stated the next meeting will be held on June 7, probably in person, but via Zoom if that is not permitted.

5. PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no comments forthcoming from the Public.

7. ADJOURN

Motion by J. Starzynski, second by J. Kendall, to adjourn this Special Meeting of the Cultural and Social Awareness Commission, to a Special Meeting at 4:15PM on Monday, June 7, 2021.

Ayes: Kendall, Rivera, Starzynski, Price and Chairperson Vega. Nays: none. Abstentions: none. Absentees: Krandel and Squires. Motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 5:25PM

Respectfully submitted,

Cindy Smiley,
City Clerk



Office of the City Clerk
Cindy Smiley, City Clerk
Jane Howie, Chief Deputy Clerk
www.woodstockil.gov

phone 815-338-4301
fax 815-334-2269
121 W. Calhoun Street
Woodstock, IL 60098

AGENDA
CITY OF WOODSTOCK
CULTURAL AND SOCIAL AWARENESS COMMISSION
Monday, May 24, 2021
4:15 p.m.

A Special Meeting of the Cultural and Social Awareness Commission will be held REMOTELY on **Monday, May 24, 2021 at 4:15PM**. In light of the current COVID-19 public health emergency, Governor J.B. Pritzker's Gubernatorial Disaster Proclamation, the Mayor has determined that an in-person meeting is not practical or prudent because of the disaster. This meeting will be held remotely only. The public can observe and comment, when appropriate, by connecting online at:

Please click the link below to join the webinar:

<https://zoom.us/j/98220326801?pwd=cUM2NlpEanEyVVB2MXB0TUtuVW5HQQT09>

Passcode: 875891 Or One tap mobile : 312-626-6799

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Acceptance of Minutes – Minutes from April 26th and May 10th Special Meetings
4. Discussion Items
 - a. Welcome new Commissioner – Curtis Price, appointed May 4, 2021
 - b. Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Project is now Diversity Celebration Sunday Series
 - 1) Funds and sponsors – money in City account and finalization of sponsorship flyer
 - 2) Marketing – finalization of DEI program flyer
 - 3) Advertising Sources & Updates on each: Chamber, City website, City Community Sign, Square Info Boards, Facebook (Chamber, City), others?
 - c. Update on activities from the meeting coordinator:
 - 1) **Latin American Culture** (Jose Rivera)
 - 2) **Racial diversity** (John Kendall) - Standing Up Against Racism and/or BLM
 - 3) **Religious diversity** (Jaci Krandel) – InterFaith Ministries, Blue Lotus Temple and Jewish community
 - 4) **Gender diversity / LGBTQ** (Crystal Squires) – PRIDE
 - 5) **Age Diversity / Age Friendly Community** (Juanita Vega) - Andrew Celentano and/or Terry Willcockson

- 6) **Homelessness/Food/Security** (Commissioner tbd) – Pioneer Center, Compassion for Campers and Woodstock Public Library Food Pantry
- 7) **Working toward DEI in the environmental world** (Joe Starzynski) -Cynthia Kanner – EDMC
- d. Nametags and business cards for commissioners – email Deb (2 of 7 reported)
- e. Next Meeting date – Zoom Meetings will be going away as of May 29 or June 11 without new legislation in Illinois
5. Public Comments
6. Other Discussion Items
7. Adjourn

In compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, this meeting is located in a facility that is physically accessible to those who have disabilities and is being conducted via ZOOM. If additional reasonable accommodations are necessary for persons who under the Act have a “disability” please contact the HR Department at (815) 338-1172 at least 72 hours prior to the meeting.